

# **BOARD OF ASSESSORS**

TOWN HALL • 525 WASHINGTON STREET • WELLESLEY, MA 02482

Stephen D. Mahoney, Chair • W. Arthur Garrity, III • David C. Chapin

Donna McCabe, AAS, Chief Assessor

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## **Meeting Notice**

Meeting: Board of Assessors

Date: Tuesday, June 17, 2014

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Place: Assessors' Office, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Town Hall

## **Minutes**

Call to Order: called to order at 8:00 a.m.

Present: Board Members: Steve Mahoney, Arthur Garrity, David Chapin, and Chief Assessor Donna McCabe. Tom Harrington, town counsel was also present.

Old Business:

- Minutes from May 20, 2014 – read and approved
- Wellesley College – exempt status on “North 40”
  - The property on Weston Road (149-5) has been exempt in prior years. Chapter 45 of the Acts of 1928 basically established a core campus area that consisted of the property owned at the time and so long as the land was occupied by the college for the purpose set forth in its charter it would *not* be taxed.
  - Property purchased after that time regardless of its use is taxed. The college has been the fifth largest taxpayer for several years.
  - The college appealed to the SJC and asked for relief of the restriction on the Weston Road property; stating that it has no plans to use the property in connection with the school and intends to sell the property and that the college has not used the property for more than 100 years.
  - The college has expressed interest in selling not only the North 40 property on Weston Road but also 636 Washington Street (125-50) and 828 Washington Street (152-1). These two Washington Street properties are not exempt and property taxes are levied on them.
  - Exempt status is determined as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year according to Mass. General Laws, chapter 59 § 5, clause third. Exempt status is

strictly construed and the burden lies with the party seeking an exemption to demonstrate that it qualifies.

- The board decided the property no longer met the requirements for exempt status and voted unanimously to place the property identified as 156 Weston Road (North 40) on the tax rolls as of July 1, 2014.
  - Donna will call Ben Hammond at the College to let him know the property will be added to the tax rolls for fiscal year 2015
- 23 Oakridge Road – Donna shared several emails received from the property owner over the past year. The board suggested she ask the town's residential valuation consultant for his comments.
  - 32 Hillside Road – Donna shared letters received from the property owner. The owner appears to be confusing fiscal years and dates of prior abatements. There are no pending appeals for fiscal year 2013 or 2014. The board would like to invite the owners to meet with the board.

New Business:

- Town counsel – meet with new counsel and discuss pending issues
  - Attorney Tom Harrington introduced himself to the board. He reviewed open meeting laws, ethics, conflict of interest and procedures for executive session.
  - Mr. Harrington was also participated in the discussion regarding the exempt status of Wellesley College and the parcel the town purchased at 494 Washington Street.
    - 494 Washington Street will come off the tax rolls for July 1, 2014. The property transferred to the town and the deed was recorded on June 3, 2014.
- FY2014 abatement applications – Discussions to be held in Executive Session – no discussion – no discussion

Appellate Tax Board (ATB); Discussions to be held in Executive Session – no discussion

Adjourn: meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.